Lower Valley NEPA (Hooper Springs)

Lower Valley Energy and Fall River Rural Electric Cooperative are full requirements customers of BPA Power Services (BPA provides generation via the South Idaho Exchange Agreement with PacifiCorp). Previous analysis performed by BPA determined that a single contingency outage could cause voltage instability in this load area. BPA transmission planning studies have predicted that voltage stability and reliability problems could occur during winter peak hours. In this service area, load peak occurs at temperatures of 20° F below zero or colder, which introduces restoration time challenges and public safety issues. Absent a solution, an outage may result in a violation of NERC Reliability Standard TPL-002-0b.

The alternatives for mitigating this risk have been under study for some time, including non-wires alternatives. An analysis was prepared that described both the preferred wires and non-wires options considered to address near term contractual, outage, reliability, and public safety concerns. That analysis recommended that BPA focus on a wires solution, in particular a plan that would involve the construction of two new substations (Hooper Springs and Lanes Creek), a new Hooper Springs – Lanes Creek 115 kV line and a new 138 kV line between Three Mile Knoll and Hooper Springs.

This project is for the NEPA process and preliminary engineering and design work to support the NEPA work. A business case for a construction project will be considered upon completion of the final EIS and determination of a final solution.